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Hey, Alexa, What's the Weather?

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Myself

Logan, Utah

November 26, 2018

“Hey, Alexa, What’s the Weather?”

Joke

Informant:

My name is Alexa Bills. I am 17 years old and am currently attending classes at Utah State University through an early college program at Intech Collegiate High school. I have always lived in Utah, residing in Tremonton for the first 12 years, and North Logan for the rest. I grew up in the LDS church, and have a long family history within it. I, however, no longer affiliate myself with any religious organizations, identifying as agnostic.

Context:

The Amazon Echo, more commonly known simply as Alexa, was released in November of 2014. Which is almost exactly four years ago. My first introduction to the AI assistant was through my brother, who bought it on pre-sale while Amazon was beta testing the product. At first I was flattered to share a name with such a product. That flattery, however, would soon turn to exasperation. The device skyrocketed into popularity going from a niche product, to something everyone knew about.

Text:

It took a few years for Alexa to catch on. The jokes were sparse at first, not a whole lot of people knew about the device. The first rib that I remember receiving was from a friend of my brothers, who thought it was funny to ask me “Alexa, what’s the weather?”, like I was the device. Doing so every single time he saw me. When we passed in the halls, when my brother and I went to his house to play Dungeons and Dragons, etc. I truly mean every single time he saw me. I remember one time he did this when he passed me and a friend while we were running in the school 5K. My friend got all up in arms, thinking that he was cruelly making fun of me for my tall height. It was kind of funny, explaining to him that it was ok, he was making fun of me, but for an entirely different thing. And not doing so, maliciously, at least I thought he wasn’t trying to be mean. That was the extent of the jokes for a while, I think they initially got worse last year. The Amazon’s Alexa had gained notoriety by then. It had made appearances on SNL and a number of YouTube videos. Every new person I met had to comment when I told them my name “Alexa?”

Like the robot thingy?” yes, Alexa like the robot thingy. Every once in a while someone in my math class would shout out “Alexa, what’s the answer.” or “Hey, wiretap what’s 240/60?” stupid little things like that. It became a common theme of many class periods. Even my coworkers decided it was fun to tease me, my manager asking me to play Africa by Toto at random times, insisting that I sing it, right there and then, in the ice cream shop. People used to make fun of me for my last name “Bills like money? You must be rich then? Hah ha ha” But with the Amazon’s Alexa out and about, the jokes pointed towards my name have gotten much cleverer, and come much more often.

Texture:

It doesn’t bother me that much, I could go by Alex, or Lexi, or anything really, if it did. I like my name, and people will always find something to poke fun at. A friend of mine chooses to tease me for sharing a name with a porn star, instead of the Amazon device, so even if it hadn’t been released there would still be ammo for them to shoot out at me.

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